

3.

THE
BIRTH-DAY;

WITH A
FEW STRICTURES ON THE TIMES;

A P O E M,

IN THREE CANTOS.

WITH

The Preface and Notes of an Edition to be published in the Year
1982.

BY A FARMER.

J. Douglas

G L A S G O W:

Printed by A. FOULIS for the AUTHOR; and sold by W. CREECH,
Edinburgh; A. ANGUS and SON, Aberdeen; and by the
said A. FOULIS, Glasgow.

[PRICE TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE.]

M.DCC.LXXXII.

THE following Poem was printed in August 1781, though, for reasons which do not concern the Public, it has not been hitherto offered to sale. The late turn in the national affairs would have determined the Author to suppress the little work had he wrote it from private views; but as he still sees men and things in the same light as formerly, he submits it to the public. However exceptionable the plan and execution may be, he hopes the design will be found friendly to the interests of virtue and society. As a friend to that constitution under which he has been long happy, and a sincere well-wisher to the peace and happiness of mankind, he wished to throw into the light of ridicule a few of the dissipated and unprincipled. Whatever effects their conduct has already produced, or whatever its more remote consequences may be, posterity will hear, with astonishment, that under all the accumulated distress brought upon Great Britain by her undutiful colonies, supported by the French King, her dangerous and most inveterate enemy, great numbers, in her own bosom, enjoyed her misfortunes. Not from pure malice to their country, for nature hath but rarely produced monsters capable of this diabolical passion; but that in her ashes they might find the means of gratifying their unmanly desires.

12th March, 1782.

F. DOUGLAS.



*** THIS little Performance having been put into the hands of a Friend for Correction, was returned with the following Letter.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I HAVE read your Manuscript with attention, but shall make
“ no remarks upon it now, as I hope to have the pleasure of
“ seeing you in a few days. On a late visit, to a Friend at Hull, I
“ was happy enough to fall in with an old Sea Captain, who had
“ been many years in the Norway trade; and, while his vessel was
“ frozen in, had twice taken a jaunt to Lapland. As the Gentle-
“ man was born in the Isle of Skie, he had the privilege of the
“ second-sight, by descent, of which he was as vain as the filliest
“ peer in Europe can be of an old patent. He had long enter-
“ tained the most favourable opinion of the Laponian Magi,
“ and wished exceedingly to be initiated into their mysteries;
“ being a man of a solemn exterior, who could freely part with a
“ little money, he found no difficulty in having his desires grati-
“ fied; he was even treated with an uncommon degree of respect,
“ which he modestly attributes to his having then wore a fur’d
“ cap, and a pair of large whiskers. I should weary you, were I
“ to repeat the tenth part of the advantages he enjoys by being
“ admitted a member of this venerable brotherhood; suffice it to
“ say, that he can command the wind to blow from what quarter

“ he pleases ; while he continued in the seafaring way, he could
 “ have carried his own vessel safely over shoals, not two feet deep,
 “ or kept her steady with all her sails abroad, in the greatest storms ;
 “ he could have easily sunk another vessel who was like to get
 “ into port before him ; and when he purchased wood, could
 “ magnify the almost invisible fissures in a stack of deals, to half
 “ an inch in breadth each. But what I think most wonderful
 “ is the power of pushing himself forward into futurity, and con-
 “ versing with men to be born many centuries hence. Nothing
 “ less than my own experience could have convinced me that this
 “ was possible. I was perfectly unhappy till the good old man
 “ bestowed a portion of his spirit upon me.

“ Ask me no questions upon this subject, for I am at liberty to
 “ tell you no more than this ; that on a certain day of the month,
 “ if the Moon be in her last quarter, I find it an easy matter to take
 “ a peep into futurity ; and whatever I hear, see, or read upon
 “ these occasions, I never forget. While the other night I re-
 “ flected upon some incidents you allude to, which will pro-
 “ bably be forgotten in less than half a century ; it awakened in
 “ me a curiosity to know whether your work itself might out-
 “ live that short period. To be satisfied of this, having put on
 “ my Laponian cap, and performed the accustomed rites, I found
 “ myself immediately in a Book-shop, where a splendid edition

“ of the BIRTH-DAY lay upon the counter, with a long Preface
 “ and Notes. I saw the Bookfeller, and some other Gentlemen
 “ in the shop, heedfully observing my dress, nor was I less obser-
 “ vant of theirs. “ Pray, Sir,” said I, “ when were these Notes
 “ and this Preface added, for I am sure my friend and acquaint-
 “ ance, the Author wrote neither of them?” “ Your acquaintance,
 “ Sir!—the man has been dead about 200 years.” “ Very true,
 “ Sir, but I have many good acquaintances and friends who have
 “ been dead above a thousand.” “ O, Sir! I beg your pardon,—
 “ I understood you literally.” I shall not repeat what further
 “ passed. All that concerns you is, that I stepped into the back shop
 “ and read your Pamphlet, with the Preface and Notes. As I had
 “ never seen any thing printed at Laurence Kirk, I asked the Book-
 “ feller where the place lay? “ In the county of Kincardine,”
 “ said he, “ in the North of Scotland. About 200 years ago it
 “ was a mean village, consisting but of a few poor huts, but lay
 “ in a very pleasant fertile country. This, with a laudable de-
 “ sire of promoting the happiness of human beings, induced the
 “ proprietor, a judge in the Court of Session, to improve the spot.
 “ With that view, he made over in perpetuity, small lots of
 “ ground for houses and gardens, for the annual payment of a
 “ certain quit rent; encouraged manufacturers to settle on it,
 “ by pecuniary aids, and obtained a charter erecting it into a Bo-
 “ rough. The gentleman is said to have been very fond of his

“ child, which he had the pleasure of seeing well advanced in his
“ own life time. His successors have been uniformly zealous for
“ the peace and happiness of the inhabitants, and the Borough is
“ now of considerable note.”

“ It is not my province to determine whether the Annotator has
“ or has not mistaken your meaning; or whether, in his Preface,
“ he has given a genuine account of yourself. I must however do
“ him the justice to observe, that he has taken much pains to pre-
“ vent the mistakes of others, and that his remarks are friendly to
“ the interests of virtue and society. I send you a copy of the
“ Preface and Notes; if you chuse to print them, I declare, upon
“ my honour, that they are justly copied from the memory of,

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Your most obedient Servant,

JUNE 7. 1781.

A. B.”

P R E F A C E

B Y T H E

E D I T O R.

SOME reasons induce us to believe that the Author of this little Piece must have had an education somewhat superior to that of a common Farmer; though, at the distance of 200 years, we can say little of a person so obscure. In a brief account of the Minor Poets, published at Laurence Kirk, about a hundred and sixty years ago, he is mentioned as the author of this and several other occasional poems, printed in the periodical papers of the age in which he lived. He is also said to have been the author of some prose tracts, published in the reign of George the Third, particularly of an Essay on Celibacy and Marriage, and a Volume of Familiar Letters from Lady Harriet Morley and others; to neither of which is his name prefixed. The last is dedicated to the Queen. Though both these tracts were generally approved of, as friendly to the interests of virtue and society, they underwent but one edition, in the author's life time; so that he could get little by publishing them. In that age, some men of distinguished merit, were honoured with his Majesty's patronage, but a taste for light frivolous reading too generally prevailed.

Our Author is said to have been so zealously attached to the government under which he lived, that he wrote a pamphlet on the subjects so unhappily disputed by Great Britain and her American colonies; printed it at his own expence, and gave away a great number of copies among the private men of Lord John Murray's Highland regiment, when they were to be shipped at Greenock *. I have seen a copy of the Familiar Letters, on the waste leaf of which was writ what follows: " The Author of
 " these Letters was the descendant of a very respectable family,
 " and had many good connexions; but in the course of ages, the
 " branch, of which he was a twig, had fallen from the opulence of
 " its ancestors. He had been unfortunate in the early part of
 " his life, (so far as not getting money is a misfortune) owing, in
 " some measure, to his having had a taste for studies not suited to
 " his circumstances. He, however, never had the distress of com-
 " pounding a debt. He had an open plainness in his manner,
 " which, though it secured him the esteem of those who knew
 " him thoroughly, rather hurt him with those who knew him
 " but a little. When he mentioned to a friend his intention of
 " dedicating this work to her Majesty, he was advised to get some
 " person of note to ask permission. " No, said he, a dedication
 7 " has somewhat the appearance of a compliment; compliments are
 " seldom sincere; and I shall not ask permission to do any thing
 " that I may do without a crime. If I knew a Lady of a more

* Brief account of the Minor Poets, p. 81.

“unexceptionable character than her Majesty, that Lady’s name
“should stand in the front of my Book †.”

’Tis said we owe this Poem to the following circumstance.
The Author one day complaining, that it was hard to have
scribed forty years, and never to have found a Patron; “So it is,
“said his friend, but it is your own fault: you misapply your
“talents. You may talk of principle, and the discerning few,
“as long as you please, but the world will always be governed by
“its own maxims. Fall in with the humour of the times; write
“smutty novels; abuse government; vindicate rebellion; and
“if you would make sure of a third edition, endeavour to set
“men loose from the restraints of religion. If you chuse to
“write for character, Fame will be your only reward, and
“even for that you must trust to posterity; the payment is
“slow, and not always certain. His Majesty’s Birth-Day ap-
“proaches; if ever the Muse be in good humour it must be
“then; she is very attentive to what passes in the world, and
“can tell you truths which every body would not chuse to hear.
“Oblige the public with a few strictures on the times.” “The
“times! what have I to do with the times? Let every man be
“as happy as his conscience will let him. The account of my
“obligations to the public may be settled in five minutes, and not

† Brief account of the Minor Poets, p. 84.

“ a pound due to ballance.” “ I do not wish you either to abuse
 “ or flatter ; give us only a little plain truth, and as much in the
 “ language of poetry as you can ; for if you touch us in the fore
 “ place, the lowest amends we expect is, that you make us laugh
 “ when you discipline others. I know you Poets are a vain set
 “ of beings, who always wish to rise in the esteem of your friends ;
 “ deserve it ; moral satire has done infinite service to society ; how
 “ many have Boileau and Pope made to blush, whom Socrates
 “ and Plato would have attacked in vain ? When I mention those
 “ great names, I mean not to flatter you with the hopes of pro-
 “ ducing a single line equal to the worst of theirs : they were
 “ masters in their art. It will, I hope, satisfy the ambition of a
 “ Farmer, that he has some chance of shining in the same firm-
 “ ment with Quarls, D’Urfey, and others of the lesser lumina-
 “ ries.” “ Well ! even that prospect is tempting ; I shall certainly
 “ put in my claim.” He is said to have had many friends, who
 had all the inclination in the world to serve him, and frequently
 attempted it, but without success. To one who proposed to pro-
 cure an office for him in the Customs, he made this short reply :
 “ I could not live upon the salary ; and would endeavour to dis-
 “ charge my duty conscientiously.” † If the man was proud, he
 was sufficiently punished ; for he died poor. Perhaps he does not
 now much regret it. Peace to his shade !

MAY 10. 1982.

† Brief account of the Minor Poets, p. 90.

T H E

B I R T H - D A Y :

I N T H R E E C A N T O S .

C A N T O I .

Invocation—Birth of the Prince—Visionary Representation, emblematic of his
future reign—Idea of a pseudo Patriot—Party-spirit exemplified.

HENCE peevish Care, and fullen Gloom,
And ever-musing Melancholy.

Come, smiling Mirth, in native bloom ;
And distant be the noise of Folly.

Muse, tune the lyre, prepare the song,
To-day a future King is born ;
Come, Echoe, every note prolong,
That marks the happy—happy—morn.

5

While FREDERICK drops the tear of joy,
To see the Royal Infant smile,
Augusta, placid, views her Boy,
And hails him King of Britain's Isle.

10

"Hope of Britons," said the Sire,
"Prop of Brunswick's antient line,
"Live! to glorious deeds aspire,
"Every bliss on earth be thine!

15

"Auspicious on thy natal hour,
"Peace and Plenty joyous smile,
"Liberty, celestial power,
"Hails thee native of her Isle.

20

"Live, my Son, with her to reign,
"As a rock the tempest braves,
"Britain scorns the tyrant's chain,
"Britons never will be slaves."

A P O E M.

13

Hark! the thund'ring cannons roar!

25

Fly the news from shore to shore;

Now the jocund bells strike in;

Now the festive rites begin.

See, unfurled in the skie,

Britain's dreaded banner fly;

30

As the Phoenix, from her urn,

Britain's happy days return.

See, in yonder opening gleam,

Justice with her scales and beam.

See, a hoary Sire appears *,

35

Part unroll'd his scroll of years;

While the hours around him play,

Ever joyous, ever gay.

See, a heaven descended pair,

(Virtue and her friends their care,)

40

Truth and Candor, drive a rout,

Never to return, thrust out.

Murder, with her reeking blade;

Treason, from her lurking shade;

• Time.

Rapine, callous, bold and fierce; 45
 Foul Adultery! stain of verse;
 Prying lying Party-spirit;
 Bloated Envy, blind to Merit;
 Faction, with her gibes and tales;
 Folly, in her hood and bells; 50
 Limping Lust, and meagre Mammon;
 Luxury, with her jowl and gammon;
 Ten good fellows, in a row,
 Roaring, drinking as they go;
 "Jolly Bacchus, thou art king! 55
 "Io pean! form the ring,
 "Men were born to drink and sing.
 "Let the sparkling glass o'erflow,
 "Time's a-going—let it go."
 Whigs and Tories, fiercely frowning, 60
 Snarling, charging, and disowning;
 A group of High and Low Church Hectors,
 Stock-jobbers, Waddling-ducks, Directors;
 Oppression, with her iron rod,
 And Priests who seldom think of God; 65

Smooth Court-encomiaſts, grave Detectors ;
 The bulwarks of the State, Projectors ;
 Pimps, Scriv'ners, circumciſ'd in ear ;
 And gambling Patriots, cloſe the rear.

A Patriot! 'tis a founding name, 70
 The foremoſt on the liſt of Fame ;
 'Tis ſaid, no miniſter can bribe him,
 Deſcribe him, honeſt Muſe, deſcribe him.
 " He is, whate'er you pleaſe to make him ;
 " For arguments there are that ſhake 'im ; 75
 " (Forbid it, Calumny ſhould mention,
 " A place, a title, or a penſion !)
 " A creature of ſuch various humours,
 " That Rock † could ne'er diſcuſs his tumors ;
 " Still in the front of thoſe who ſtudy 80
 " To find or make court-waters muddy ;
 " Still hunting after little ſtories,
 " As whilom did the Whigs and Tories ;
 " Retailing them with front of braſs,
 " And whoſo doubts them is an aſs ; 85

† A noted Quack-Doctor.

" Or worse, a ministerial tool,
 " For knave's a harder word than fool ;
 " He boasts the virtues of a Roman,
 " Yet holds an honest man uncommon ;
 " Though reason'd down, seen through, out-voted, 90
 " And turn'd against him all he quoted,
 " Our plodding hero nothing shocks ;
 " (If I mistake, correct me, * * *.)
 " With an unbounded flow of words,
 " Sharp-edg'd, as DON FERARA'S § fwords, 95
 " He hacks and flashes at the bench,
 " As AJAX, when he storm'd the trench.

" Now, in the rear, he marks their motions,
 " And minutes down their late promotions ;
 " With Nota Benes, Hows and Whys, 100
 " And where each favourite's interest lies.
 " Some have a sister, some a borrough,
 " And others may have horns to-morrow ;
 " Some very poor, and therefore needy,
 " And others blustering, bold and greedy. 105

§ A celebrated Spanish sword-maker.

"Some sigh for titles, some for ribbons ;

"And some have merit, witness GIBBONS :

"Now one by one he tries their strength,

"And some lays sprawling at their length ;

"Some, smart, return him blows for blows ; 110

"Some loudly call for Ayes and Noes :

"The pygmy champions take the field,

"And heroes, six feet high, must yield."

Ah! in the direful war of tongues,

What waste of time, of breath, of lungs! 115

How many thirsty souls would die,

Had Bacchus not a temple nigh?

How many weary eyes would close,

But for the wondrous power of prose?

Verse yield the palm! when B—KE harrangues, 120

Attention on each period hangs ;

Tho' Judgment reprobates a part,

Truth loves a generous honest heart.

If B—R—E thunders in your ear,
Or for a veteran drops a tear, 125
In Candor's equal ballance weigh,
What sterling Common Sense may say.

Some hold that tongues were only meant,
In aid of honours by descent ;
To scare the birds that pick the corn, 130
Or roar, with bucks, "The early horn."
To sing the Syren song of Folly,
Or gibe with serious things and holy.
Doff, doff your caps, ye new creations,
Ye lesser B—s know your stations ! 135
RONSARO, wiser than his teachers,
Is up to plead the cause of leachers.
Wife, witty, every thing but vain,
He spies a hag in Lambeth-lane,
With open mouth, gives chase, and cries, 140
"Holloa the witch !"——The culprit flies ;
Craves the protection of his G—ce,
Who smiles to see the wild-geese chase.

- “ Why, good my L--d, so wondrous witty?
“ Reformer-general of the city, 145
“ A place of great account”——“ What then?”
“ Awaits you: do I now speak plain?”
“ Why faith, my L--d, I scorn a place,
“ But if I can oblige your G--ce,
“ But just command me.” “ Well, you can, 150
“ Consider only you’re a man.”
“ A man, my L--d, nay more, a ---,
“ Who holds his honour very dear.”
“ Then think, with candor of another:
“ This worthy matron is your mother; 155
“ She nurs’d you in your tender years,
“ And on your front her mark appears.”
“ Her mark! a freeman, nobly born,
“ Church, Colleges, and Schools I scorn.”
“ But not the place.” “ Yes, ere the Sunday, 160
“ Shall be a jota more than Monday.”
“ ’Tis more already. Sundry Acts——
“ What need to condescend on facts?

" Say, shall we reverence the Laws ?

" Or, nobly wild in Freedom's cause, 165

" Exclaim with Bardolph, from the stocks,

" I scorn your chains, your bolts, and locks ;

" An Englishman I am, and demme,

" If Acts of Parliament shall tame me."

Sick of the Patriot's worst disease, 170

To see a Minister at ease,

FRONTINO oft had singled out,

PRIMERO, from the venal rout ;

With dignity he dealt his blows,

And scorn'd to fight with meaner foes. 175

Of ready wit and fluent tongue,

(Which rather somewhat loosely hung)

Not over modest, nor too bold,

He knew the golden mean to hold.

But, ah ! on one unlucky day, 180

Decorum left him on the way.

" Adieu," he said, " I feel the lighter,

" Now have at all but crown and mitre !"——

The axle smokes, the pavement rings,
And keen Impatience claps her wings. 185

Now seated ; from his threat'ning eye,
Contractors, Placemen, trembling fly ;
PRIMERO only durst abide it ;
(If aught he fear'd, he well could hide it.)

Now bursts the storm, the Forum rings, 190

And Memory opens all her springs ;
Unnumber'd evils done, or plotted,
She in her table-book had noted ;
Solacing to the State, in labor,
As to the dying life and tabor. 195

Provok'd, that nothing could provoke,
FRONTINO figh'd and inly spoke ;
" This coolness who the devil can bear !
" Swell Rhetorick, thunder in his ear !
" Touch every string that shakes the soul, 200
" Or he or I must lose the vole.
" Towers, axes, scaffolds, lend your aid,
" And let the long arrear be paid.

- "Impeachment, rise! in all thy rage,
"And drive the caitiff off the stage." 205
This to himself; the rest aloud,
Preambl'd with his Country's good.
"Shall this insidious fly Sejanus
"Divide the loaves *tam multos annos*;
"Ad libitum extend his taxes, 210
"And we move glibly round his axis;
"Corruption's muffl'd hand the while,
"Supplying store of rancid oil?
"Thus Ralpho, rosy fleek and fair,
"Well mounted on his dapple mare, 215
"Enjoys the pleasures of the road,
"While dull pack-horses drag the load.
"Sic nos---Be firm, my Friends, be wise,
"Your trade declines, your taxes rise;
"From John-a-Groat's to Cornwall Point, 220
"All things are strangely out of joint.
"O Cives! Patres! heu, sic mores!
"Shall gallant Whigs give place to Tories?

" Friends ! Citizens ! awake to Fame !
 " Is Public Virtue but a name ? 225
 " What wonders have our fathers done ?
 " What glorious battles fought and won ?
 " And shall their fons give up the field,
 " While they have tongues and fwords to wield ?
 " Give place to those who heretofore, 230
 " Durst scarce come farther than the door ;
 " Who, if they hop'd a tidefman's place,
 " Paid court a twelvemonth to his Grace.
 " O fatal day to Britain's glory,
 " When Whigs fhall truckle to a Tory. 235
 " Shall thus our fuffering country groan,
 " And we, her faviors, ftand alone ?
 " O where is public virtue flown !"

Then with the fire of twenty Hectors,
 He calls for axes, rods, and Liétors. 240
 But ah ! in thefe degenerate days,
 How cold the facred love of praife !

The Liſtors, deaf to Honour's call,
 Can hear an angry Tribune bawl;
 Unmov'd can hear; nor care a teſter, 245
 If they but eat, who ſhall be maſter.

Repeaters, drawn from fifty fobs,
 Announce a patience leſs than Job's;
 Some plan a race, and ſome a meeting,
 Where all agree, in what's good eating. 250
 Sir Fopling gently twirls his cane,
 And mourns the nymphs his face has ſlain;
 While Aufter over-leaps the ditches,
 To ſtorm the fox with dogs and bitches.

PRIMERO, calmly bears the ſhock, 255
 Nor beats his head againſt a rock;
 He knows the ſtrongeſt lungs muſt fail,
 And, till exhausted, lets them rail.
 Attack'd, in great Therſites ſtile,
 The man has even dar'd to ſmile. 260

A P O E M.

25

Sedate, as MANSFIELD on the Bench,
 He neither scolds the Dutch nor French;
 Can even the faints of Boston mention,
 And hear them oil'd with great attention,
 Nod o'er his panegyrist's flumm'ry,
 Yet drop a tear to brave MONTGOM'RY;
 Divide the rebel from the man,
 And grant him all that virtue can.

265

Tho' not an epicure in meats,
 (As well it may be seen) he eats:
 Thus great Sir ROBERT, heretofore,
 Was bluff and jolly at threescore;
 Thus honest PELHAM grac'd his vest:
 Of men and ministers the best.
 Forbid that meagre skin and bone,
 Should stand Palladium of the throne!
 He drinks; but business never lingers;
 He keeps no op'ra girls, nor fingers.
 So fond of peace, that all his life,
 He never quarrel'd with his wife;

270

275

280

D

Their names unknown at Doctors Commons,
 As Luxury to the antient Romans.
 No surly porter at his gate,
 Dares make the humble suppliant wait;
 The wrong'd may of their wrongs complain, 285
 And Justice never sues in vain.

All this Detraction fees, with pain,
 Yet labours hard her point to gain;
 For, from the Medway to the Forth,
 The burthen of her song is N—TH *. 290

* Probably the Author may have had in his eye, Frederick North, Esq; commonly called Lord North, whom we find at the head of the Treasury, for many years, in the reign of George the Third. He is said to have been a man of so happy a disposition that the attacks of Party-spirit never gave him a moment's pain. Well acquainted with the various forms she assumed, he could never be surprized. If, with a serious brow, she threatened vengeance, he neither changed colour, nor lost his temper. If, in lighter strain, she sported with his conduct and character, his defence was in her own stile. When her abuse became personal, he turned it aside so gently, and with so much good humour, that the hag became at last ashamed, and only snarled at his underlings. As a man, he had no enemies; though he had many as a minister; as indeed all ministers must have. Were it not for the damage which the Public would sustain, we could wish that some of those Gentlemen who think it so easy a matter to manage the great machine of Government, had a few months trial of it, when it would probably appear, that they are as fit for it as Phaeton was to

Is there a fop aware of fighting ?
 Or hackney scribe that would be writing ?
 N—TH screens the one, and fees the other,
 So sure as kitten fucks its mother.

Does a Contractor clear a plum ? 295
 Who doubts but he divides the fum ?
 Does an Exciseman wrong a dealer ?
 Or Clerk, in office, bilk his taylor ?
 All claim the ministerial wing ;
 All flows from the corrupted spring. 300

Thus, vivid, to the mental eye,
 The Muse brings distant objects nigh.
 Thus, to her meanest votary kind,
 With aspect mild, she spake her mind.

guide the Chariot of the Sun. As the Author pays a higher compliment to Mr Pelham, who had been long dead, than any he has paid to Lord North, who may have been alive when he wrote, it clears him from the remotest suspicion of Flattery. True it is, those in power are generally flattered ; but it is no less true, that an honest man will express his real sentiments, even of a minister. Add to this, that our Farmer was in his grand climacteric when he writ the Poem, and being totally unknown to Courts and Ministers, had nothing to hope.

" Tho' Britain boasts a Prince her own, 305
" Before that Prince ascends the throne,
" Eight thousand furs shall set and rise,
" And many a wrestler yield the prize.
" Saint Stephen's Hall be thrice recruited,
" And Patriots, now ador'd, be hooted. 310
" The bloom on Celia's cheek shall fade ;
" And many a virgin die a maid.
" Some, (which in antient times was worse,)
" Shall live the relicts of Divorce ;
" Shall live the scorn and jest of all, 315
" From Hyde-park Corner to Whitehall.

" These names, (for some are yet no more)
" Succeeding those that went before,
" Shall bounce their little while, and then,
" Another race shall seize the rein. 320
" From age to age the lust of power,
" Supplies of Patriots shall insure ;
" And every Minister, by place,
" Be void of goodness and of grace."

THE
B I R T H - D A Y.

C A N T O II.

Anticipated View of a Military Commander,—and of a Marine Patriot—
Virtues of the Muse's Rod.

TH R I C E wav'd the Muse her magic wand,
(A charm which nothing can withstand,)
When lo, debarking from the main,
In order mov'd a motely train.

Prickt on a bloodless lance was born, 5
A tawdry ribbon, stain'd and torn;
Fit emblem of a future hero,
The very counter-part of NERO :
Like him, to be in youth below'd,
And by the judging few approv'd. 10

Like him, to rise to chief command,
(Heav'n's rod to scourge a guilty land.)

Like him, tho' not in purple array'd,
The patron of the fidling trade.

Like him, on Dissipation's lap,
To take his noon and evening nap.

15

Like him, asleep in Circe's arms,
To flight Bellona's rougher charms ;

Like him, the execration, scorn,
Of all hereafter to be born.

20

“ Fall Rome ! I gloriously offend !

“ Ye curling flames to heav'n ascend.

“ Thus Ilium fell, and Homer sung,

“ When every muse had tipt his tongue.”

So spake the miscreant ; but our hero,

25

Not just so fond of fame as NERO ;

Wish'd no proud city to be burn'd,

Left on himself the flames had turn'd.

He suck'd his suffering country's blood,

And check'd her laurels in the bud ;

30

A P O E M.

31

Refrain'd the ardor of her fons,
As BRENUS of his Gauls and Huns;
Till the last talent should be weigh'd,
Then fight who will, his game was play'd.

Depicted *par la main de Guilame*, 35
And wrote below, "for great Sir ——,"
A leering harlot bears a shield,
Lutes and guittars take up the field;
Around it, Cupids, smiling Loves,
And Venus twittering with her doves; 40
A group of laughter-loving dames,
Reflecting Phoebus' radiant beams;
While Pan, the master of the song,
And jolly Bacchus, reel along.
Pikes, halberts, powder-pluffs, attend it, 45
With labels on their breasts appended,
Expressive of their mind and manners;
While traul behind, Britannia's banners.
"Avaunt the nauseous stench of war!—
"Come, Venus, take us in thy car; 50

- " The hecatombs we vow'd are paid,
 " See, on thy sacred altar laid,
 " Fans, ribbons, scented gloves, and laces,
 " Pomatum, locks, and tweezer-cases.
 " Come, goddess ! come, the fleeting hour, 55
 " Is all the brave have in their power.
 " What's Fame? a breath beyond the grave;
 " Where sleep the hero and the slave.
 " What's Love of Country? mere pretence;
 " Where shall we be a cent'ry hence? 60
 " Or basking in th' Elysian fields,
 " Or scouring Pluto's rusty shields.
 " What's Liberty? a mode of thinking,
 " Of writing, speaking, wh—r—g, drinking;
 " Abridg'd, in one or all we grumble; 65
 " Indulg'd, are courteous, meek and humble.
 " What's Honour? stoutly to defend
 " Whatever means promote your end.
 " Of Human Wishes what's the sum?
 " A wh—re, a chariot and a plum. 70

"Come, Pleasure! smile on beau and belle,
"And then the virtuous fools may rail."

Again she wav'd the rod of power,
And now from Cynthia's noontide bower,
We overlook the liquid plain, 75

Where Avarice has her thousands slain;
And see, with crouded sail, advance,
A fleet, in port, the dread of France;
But mild and gentle on the seas,
As setting sun, or western breeze. 80

The flags were out, the pendants flying,
But not a man in dread of dying.

An action, as it were, had been,
When who were who was clearly seen.

Now ceas'd the thunders of the deep, 85
Some play at cards, and others sleep;
Some earnest urge, I know not what,
And others answer this or that.

E

Then thus the chief. " I'll hear no more !

" Return we to our native shore.

90

" What ! lose my ships ? offend my friends,

" And counteract their gracious ends ?

" I hope the thanks of wives and spouſes,

" And warm applauſe of both the * * *.

" Hoa ! you to windward back your ſails,

95

" What demon in the fleet prevails ! —

" Shall any dare to chaſe, till I,

" Have giv'n the ſignals when and why ?

" You, Boas'n ! dem you ! haul the ſheet,

" Let others fight ; I'll ſave the fleet."

100

Here reſt we, till an evening ſong

A while the feſtive rites prolong ;

Or ſhall we, on this joyous day,

Attempt an intermediate lay ?

Our theme the Muſe's magic rod,

105

Apollo, deign thy gracious nod !

Reſpected ſhades ! we ſing of you,

Who well its powers and virtues knew.

When the loud tempest whirls abroad,
If Shakespeare gently waves the rod, 110
The winds are still, the turgid wave
Sinks peaceful to its watry grave.
But if he lifts his arm on high,
(Tho' not a speck obscures the skie)
Forth rush the Boreal powers aghast, 115
And bursts the hoarse tremendous blast :
The lightning flies, the thunder roars,
And Ocean heaves on all her shores.

It drew the monsters from the deep,
Or made the eye of Murder weep ; 120
It smooth'd the wrinkl'd brow of Age,
Or sooth'd the stern oppressor's rage ;
It call'd the wayward sisters forth,
In all the horrors of the North ;
And shook the traitor's soul, Macbeth, 125
When in the environs of Death ;
It fir'd Othello's sickly brain,
While weeping Virtue sued in vain ;

It rag'd in ill-requited Lear,
Till Satan, shudd'ring, dropt a tear. 130
When with the Comic Muse he sported,
And bucks, and knaves, and fools dehorted,
The Cynic would have tried in vain
His tick'ld muscles to restrain.
He begg'd the rod so oft, the Muse 135
Said, " Take it, favourite Child, and use,
" Call forth ideal forms at will,
" And give them semblance power and skill ;
" Plague me no more ; the rod is yours,
" Till creeping age exhaust your powers ; 140
" And, if your brother Ben should want it,
" With my permission, freely grant it."

Thrice wav'd, it brought to Milton's eye,
The past transactions of the skie.
Chaos, terrific form ! it rear'd, 145
Ere time or sun had yet appear'd ;
With awful darkness girt his throne,
Silence his sad compeer alone.

Now works the plastic Power of Love,
The waves are still, the zephyrs move, 150
Astonish'd Chaos plung'd below,
And Harmony began to flow.
Uprose a world : the solar fire,
(Bright emblem of its heav'nly Sire !)
Dispell'd the darkness ; Earth and Air, 155
And Water smil'd ; for God was there.
At last the Sire, to crown the whole,
A body form'd, and breath'd a soul ;
He rested from his work of days,
And glad Creation hymn'd his praise. 160
Responsive to the Muse's call,
The wars which shook th' ethereal hall,
Assume their pristine dreadful form,
When angels prodigies perform,
And Satan, vainly, dares defy, 165
The Sovereign Ruler of the skie.

If Butler sings, beware your fides ;
The Muse a testy courser rides ;

A group of raggamuffins round her,
Are apt to make her kick or founder. 170

Tinkers, reformers of the state,
And gapers for the Church's plate ;
Sweet fingers, Muggletonians, grumblers,
Rope-dancers, chimney-sweeps, and tumblers.

The Muse, with nice discerning eye, 175
Their views and tempers could descry ;
And to the laughter-lover's pleasure,
Has paid their dues, in weight and measure.

Ah, Butler! dire reproach of CHARLES,
Whose gracious father pension'd Quarles. 180

To Dryden, born in evil days,
When Wit and Virtue were at odds,
She gave in charge to smoothe her lays,
And clear her rough and craggy roads.

" Be great, my Son," she said, " and claim, 185
" To be in Britain's Isle commander ;

" But if thou wouldst aspire to fame,

" Go twine a wreath for Alexander.

" Know, that a Poet shall succeed,

" (Not to thy laurel, but thy merit,)

190

" To clear my foil of every weed,

" And write with Roman force and spirit.

" Homer shall listen to his song,

" (For he shall sing of Kings and Heroes,)

" Nor grieve to have been dead so long,

195

" To live again in brighter aeras.

" To thee the Mantuan Bard shall owe it,

" That Britain knows him as a Poet;

" But Pope, in Horace' courtly stile

" Shall mark the manners of the Isle;

200

" In moral satire shall excel,

" All that before had written well.

" Yet shall a nest of hornets sting him,

" Till in Oblivion's gulph he fling 'em."

To Addison, (a favourite son,)

205

In accent sweet, the Muse begun,

" While others baffle for the bays,

" Be modest worth thy highest praise.

" Go see the world, enlarge thy mind,

" And be the friend of human kind.

210

" When I inspire the soaring lay,

" Sing thou of Bleinheim's glorious day ;

" Or bring a Roman on the stage ;

" Too good for the Augustan age,

" Who with his Brutus, wish'd to see,

215

" His country virtuous, great and free.

" With wit and humour charm the age,

" And laugh to silence party rage ;

" Respected live, lamented die,

" And take thy station in the skies."

220

The friendly inoffensive Gay,

Well with the Muse's Rod could play :

Write pretty Fables for the Duke,

Or Courts and Ministers rebuke ;

A P O E M.

41

Could flyly peep behind the screen,

225

Tho' many a strong bar'd door between.

In Don Mackheath and Madam Polly,

Could laugh at Impudence and Folly ;

Could nod with Justice, on the bench,

Or weep with Peasecod, and his wench ;

230

Could mimic every comic elf,

And even be the jest himself :

He " sold his sheep for loops and buttons,"

Resolv'd to pipe no more to muttons ;

But, ah ! for courtly life unfit,

235

(The man was modest, tho' a wit,)

He could not lie, and would not flatter,

Nor call that wine he knew but water.

" Child, said the Muse, 'tis all in vain,

" Courts will be courts, and men be men ;

240

" Or be what others are, or know,

" Preferment's wind will never blow."

" What others are ! give up with Pope ?

" And all my hopes in Queens'bry drop ?"

- " Then fly—Retirement chides thy stay; } 245
 " Thy friend shall meet thee on the way, }
 " And joyous hail thee, " Welcome, Gay! }
 " Welcome, my Friend, to Twick'nām's grot,
 " And, thanks to Heav'n! without a blot.
 " Escap'd a Court's seducing charms, 250
 " Welcome to Friendship's longing arms!
 " Here let us calmly pass our days,
 " And mortify the lust of praise;
 " Here smile to see the world so wise,
 " To barter Peace, for Butterflies. 255
 " Here Competence shall spread the board,
 " Oeconomy shall be our steward;
 " And Homer sober port afford. }
 " The Dean shall fend us many a song,
 " And good Arbuthnot life prolong. 260
 " And should you long for courts and levees,
 " The Muse shall lead you to a crevice,
 " Where you may see them all unseen,
 " And feast your eyes with King and Queen."

A P O E M.

43

" No ; there, my Friend, you're fairly out ; 265
 " In such a motely ravel'd rout,
 " We neither see the King nor Queen,
 " But only those who stand between ;
 " Are they our friends ? Our work is done.
 " Our enemies ? We may be gone. 270
 " Had smiles and gracious nods been sterling,
 " Gay, long ere now, had rode in Berlin.
 " But peace to courts ! they suit not me,
 " Who, born a Freeman, would be free."

She wav'd her rod ; a Priest arose, 275
 In youth to sing " The Love of Fame,"
 Mature, to foil an host of foes,
 And glow with an immortal flame.

" Astonish'd Vice shall, trembling, hear,
 " The Song of Night her thoughts reveal ; 280
 " And loudly, in Lorenzo's ear,
 " Shall Conscience ring her startling peal.

" Religion claims him all her own,
" Where'er his poignant lays are sung,
" The batter'd Infidel shall frown,
" And Virtue triumph in her Young."

285

Thomson, in softly pleasing strain,
Sued for its aid, nor sued in vain.
Description joyful claps her wings,
And on the storm aloft she springs;
Now dives the mine, or sweeps the lawn,
Or rises with the early dawn.

290

" The hours unbar the gates of light,"
Up fly the noxious damps of night;
Million's of opening flowers appear,
And Nature's songsters charm the ear.
Now on a cloud, sublime, she rides,
Far, far below her, earth and tides;
Now daring soars above the skies,
As far as human thought can rise.
O early lost ! sincerely mourn'd,
By Friendship's hand thy dust inurn'd—

295

300

But Littleton shall spread thy fame :
Alike your pursuits, and your flame.

To Meditation's lonely walk, 305
Deep musing, oft would Gray retire,
With streams, and woods, and mountains talk,
Or pensive, touch the warbling lyre.

Fair Science, in the pride of Spring,
The retrospective Muse espies, 310
And grateful, fawns the holy King,
Who bade her sacred temples rise.

In tender wailing accent sings,
Days, that alas, return no more !
While yet unfledg'd her infant wings, 315
To Folly's regions durst not soar.

When smiling Innocence and Peace,
Walk'd arm in arm along the green,

And rising hope, and heart-felt ease,
Reflected joy on every scene.

320

Gone, ah for ever gone, that spring!
Now giddy Passion takes the rein,
Around a thousand Syrens sing,
And Reason claims her right in vain.

Sly Disappointment lurks the while,
With sad Repentance in her rear,
And now upsprings the latent toil,
And ruthless Harpies inly tear.

325

In the bleak, wither'd vale of years,
Sore bends the hoary head of Age;
A busy, bustling race appears,
And pain and sorrow yield the stage. *

330

But hark! in Pindar's lofty strain,
Correctly wild the numbers flow;

* Alluding to the fine Poem on a distant Prospect of Eton College.

A P O E M.

47

"Rage, tyrant Power, but rage in vain,

335

"The righteous gods shall bring thee low."

When Cambria's Bard infuriate flings

The flaming bolt at Edward's head,

As whizzing in the air it wings,

Sore shakes the soul with awful dread!

340

In wrath, he strikes the trembling lyre,

The tear of grief begins to flow,

But slaughter'd chiefs enflame his ire,

And dreadful is the song of woe! †

Adjoining to the sacred bower,

345

Where Pride, unblushing, hangs her crest,

He oft enjoy'd the pensive hour,

"For there the weary are at rest."

Now from th' unpolish'd slab would learn,

What rustic Vanity could spell,

350

† Alluding to his Pindaric Odes, chiefly to the admirable one entitled
"the Bard."

How Thomas erst his bread did earn,
And who the dame he lov'd so well.

What children dear to him she bore,
And where they liv'd, and when they dy'd ;
They liv'd and dy'd : it said no more, 355
Or else the simple stone had ly'd.

Now on the sculptur'd tomb he reads
What modest truth would blush to tell,
The names, the titles, warlike deeds,
Of heroes who in battle fell. 360

But ah, forgot th' unnumber'd throng,
Who nobly fought, and bravely dy'd !
Too low to claim the Poet's song,
Nor to the great were they ally'd.

Yet in the grateful Briton's heart, 365
They have a tomb shall ne'er decay,

A P O E M.

49

For fathers shall to sons impart,
The impress of their honour'd clay.

To man he pays the kindred sigh ;
A long funereal train appear ;
Aloft the pendant streamers fly,
And slow and solemn moves the bier.

370

In silent grief, the hopeful heir
Laments th' indulgent parent gone ;
While many a heart-felt sigh and tear
The generous master's death bemoan.

375

'Tis over.—Dust, consign'd to dust,
Return the fable pensive train ;
O breath ! delusive prop of trust,
And human pursuits all how vain !

380

Dear to the Muse was Nature's child !
She strung his sweetly pleasing lyre ;
Harmonious, picturesque and mild
His verse, yet glow'd with heav'nly fire.

G

Whate'er could elevate the soul, 385
 Or sooth the pangs of human woe,
 He ardent fought from pole to pole,
 And painted with unfading glow.

In Mafon's boldly daring strain,
 The Grecian Muse illumines the age, 390
 Correct, as Judgment held the pen,
 Sublimely chaste, as Plutarch's page.

Upstarts a venerable Sire,
 Ap Einion *, Bard of high renown ;
 He hears his own melodious lyre, 395
 And cries, " My son, I yield the crown."

When Beattie, in the guise of Er'mite,
 Implor'd her aid to write his Hermit,
 " Go on, my son," she said, " nor fear,
 " I'll lead thy hand and tune thine ear. 400

* Howel ap Einion Lygliw, a celebrated Welsh bard, an excellent specimen of whose poetry, we have in Mr. Pennant's Tour in Wales, p. 281. I envy the man who can read the original.

" Sweet as th' Arabian zephyr blows,
 " And modest as the blushing rose,
 " Fair Piety shall chaunt the song,
 " And Harmony the notes prolong.
 " Pale Doubt shall brighten into Joy, 405
 " And dark Distrust no more annoy;
 " Hope, heav'n-descended, close her eye,
 " Exulting that she's now to die;
 " And Charity, on seraph's wing,
 " Up from the bed of Death shall spring †. 410

" When thy Retirement silent past,
 " Who was it lifted up her veil?
 " When good Eliza breath'd her last,
 " Who fram'd the soul-composing tale?

" When Hope, in vivid colours, drew 415
 " Her ramparts, which repel the storm,

† Though this Poem consists but of forty-eight lines, it has always been esteemed a master-piece in its kind. The melodious flow of the numbers; the delicacy of the sentiment; the Hermit's humble and ingenuous confession, in the last stanza but one; his fervent address to the Supreme Being, and the glow of immortality which immediately succeeds, have a most agreeable effect upon the mind.

" Who questions whether I or you,

" Gave the ideal vision form ?

" Who, in the council of the Hares,

" Gave Puffs the powers of thought and speech? 420

" Who holds them either yours, or theirs,

" Mistakes a Horace for a Creech.

" Then boast not thou the aid of Nine,

" The Minstrel, every page is mine."

To Whitehead if I must do right,

425

No doubt, his Birth-Day Odes have merit,

He, ere in duty bound, could write

With elegance, and eke with spirit.

But drop him, Muse—I hate the man

Sincerely be he faint or finner,

430

Who quaffs his cordial cup of sack,

While I drink water at my dinner.

" Hate him ! recal the ugly phrase,

" Did even a Shadwell wear the bays,

“ What right have you to sip his nectar,
 “ A Curate you, and he a rector ?”
 Faith, none at all—I sue for mercy,
 Which never DOUGLAS did, nor PERCY.

435

T H E

B I R T H - D A Y.

C A N T O III.

Britannia introduced—Her Address to Britons—She foretels the American War, and points out its consequences—Americans assume the military character—France and Spain support them—Address to Peace.

B R I T A N N I A, joyous, seiz'd her shield,
 To shade her future King from harm;
 Determin'd still to keep the field,
 Should France and Spain against him arm.

Then thus, in accent mild, she spoke;

5

“ This truth is firm, as Fate's decree,

“ Accustom'd to her easy yoke,

“ The sons of Liberty are free.

" Disjoin'd, and dash'd by Faction's wave,
" Your hopes shall in the dust be laid; 10
" But firm, united, bold and brave,
" The gods your righteous cause shall aid.

" In vain shall states combin'd oppose
" Your Prince, the favourite of the skies,
" Who, greatly victor o'er his foes, 15
" From glory shall to glory rise.

" Beneath his mild and gentle sway,
" The arts and sciences shall smile,
" While servile nations sadly say,
" O happy! happy, Britain's Isle!" 20

" Yet gathering in the western skie,
" The congregated vapours roll,
" The storm shall burst, the lightning fly,
" The thunder roar, from pole to pole.

" Beyond the broad Atlantic wave, 25
" (I see it, in the womb of Time,)

" Shall bold Rebellion fume and rave,
" And Faction shall applaud her crime.

" Bellona, scourge of human kind,
" Shall drench the foil with blood and gore, 30
" (When mad Ambition fires the mind,
" Rebellion seems a crime no more.)

" While meek ey'd Pity drops a tear,
" O'er hapless youths untimely slain,
" Havock shall smite in front and rear, 35
" And Mercy beat her breast in vain!

" The fire of Discord, pleas'd to see
" His daughter deal her deadly blows,
" Shall cry, " My child, be worthy me!
" And glut the plain with friends and foes;" 40

" While deeply sigh the gracious powers,
" Charg'd with the virtuous and the just;
" To strow their thorny paths with flow'rs,
" Or sooth them on their bed of dust.

" Th' appointed line of duty run, 45

" And active virtue, try'd by fire,

" To what besides beneath the sun,

" Can great and generous souls aspire?

" O blind to truth! who when they fall,

" Arraign the Sov'reign of the skies; 50

" Are time and trash their hope, their all?

" A Falkland only falls to rife.

" Deep sighs and hollow groans announce,

" A mother, in the world alone;

" Ten hopeful children had she once, 55

" Now slain her last surviving son.

" The tearful widow inly sighs,

" While smiling infants play around,

" To see their face, or meet their eyes

" Averse—In both the father's found. 60

" The blooming maid shall mourn the day

" That stretch'd her lover on the plain,

" A torpid, lifeless lump of clay,

" Alas ! he lies among the slain !

" In loose attire and sportive mood,

65

" Eliza trips along the lawn ;

" Eliza, late so wise and good,

" Feels not the ray of heav'n withdrawn !

" Philander to her heart was dear,

" Another moon had seen them one,

70

" This fatal morn arriv'd the bier,

" On which his mangl'd corse was thrown !

" Adown the furrow'd cheek of Age,

" The briny tear shall copious flow,

" Till Time fold down the last sad page,

75

" And shade it from a world of woe.

" Enough.—To lighter scenes I turn,

" Where Folly leads the world astray ;

" Where souls, for trash, ignobly burn,

" And Riot forms her wild array.

80

" He who erewhile made war on woods,
 " Or drain'd the bogs and deep favannas,
 " Shall rank with heroes, bucks, and bloods,
 " And W——R——N shall sing hofannas.

" Clerks, planters, priests, a motely crew, 85
 " Shall meet, and be yclep'd the Congress;
 " Marquies and Abbies, *en la lieu*,
 " Shall teach them to assume *la bonne grace*.

" Jack Presbyter, who hates a cross,
 " And surplice, as he hates the devil, 90
 " Shall shift his ground, like Solway Moss, *
 " And to the Pope himself be civil.

" Boston shall burn the Book of Martyrs,
 " And Philadelphia cock her hat;
 " Quebec, in peace, enjoy her charters, 95
 " And Rome and Calvin friendly chat.

* A large morass, near the Solway Frith, which, in that age, moved some considerable distance from its former site.

" Then Gaul, forgetful of the arm,
" That recently had check'd her pride,
" With dire invasions shall alarm,
" While safe in port her navies ride. 100

" Shall screen your foes, adopt their quarrels,
" And fawn on traitors she abhors ;
" While Amsterdam shall lend them barrels,
" To pack the herrings on their shores.

" Iberia, too, solemnly flow, 105
" Again the dupe of French finesse,
" Shall join to strike the fatal blow,
" Again shall share the *coup de grace*.

" Still fighting for her rock, Gibraltar,
" (What verse can bear the horrid sound!) 110
" Shall sell a horse to buy a halter,
" And stake a million 'gainst a pound.

" The sage of France shall, gracious, fend 'em
" A hundred thousand *cher ami's*,

" His fleets and armies shall defend 'em, 115
" Till he be sov'reign of the seas.

" And then, just as the dev'l would have it,
" Their faithful " great and good ally,"
" Shall shew, as was remark'd by David,
" That faith in Princes is a lie." 120

" Wise, steady, persevering, just,
" Your Sov'reign shall at last prevail,
" And subjects, prostrate in the dust,
" Implore the rights from which they fell."

Come, smiling Peace! celestial maid! 125
And still the horrid din of war;
Come, we implore thy friendly aid,
Our guardian, guide, and polar star.

O come! with Commerce in thy train,
And Ceres, then thy poor shall sing; 130
Faction shall, growling, bite her chain,
And all revere a patriot King.

THE END.

N O T E S
T O T H E
F I R S T C A N T O.

LINE 15. *Live, to glorious, &c.* All the historians of that age agree, that Frederic, Prince of Wales, though born a foreigner, was distinguished for a warm zeal for Liberty; that he was the Meccenas of literature, and the beneficent Patron of neglected merit. When therefore the Author makes his Royal Highness express a wish that his Son might aspire to glorious deeds, he probably understood him to mean, that he might govern a free people according to their laws, rather than be a busy bustling hero, or in other words, a scourge of mankind.

L. 42. *Never to return, &c.* Here our Author does not seem to have had the spirit of prophecy, for, from the histories of that period, it appears, that many of these vices reproached the reign of George III. It is true they had no countenance from the royal example; and perhaps the Author only meant that they would be driven out, so far as the influence of a regular court could prevail.

L. 46. *Foul Adultery, &c.* Though several divorces were sued for, and obtained, during the reign of this Prince, it would not seem that this vice was held in repute, for if it had, the Author, who was but a simple labourer of the ground, would not have presumed to speak of it with so much contempt. That

Adultery is so rarely heard of in the present age, may be in a high degree owing to the reformation of the stage, the suppression of masquerades, and the great care taken in the education of youth of both sexes.

L. 60. *Whigs and Tories, &c.* Two factions which divided and reproached Great Britain for more than a century, and, till the reign of George III. are said to have been kept up by the ministry: all court-favours were bestowed upon the former, which was an effectual way to perpetuate the evil. The Whigs were long distinguished by a certain twang in their voice, as if they had spoken through their nose; by an aversion to fish in time of Lent, and a peculiar acrimony in their stile when they spoke of Charles the First. The Tories were remarkable for their affection to strong beer and English roast beef; for the smart cock of their hats, and the volubility with which they swore. They were also distinguished by a flaming zeal for High Church, that is, as we would express it, for the more turbulent and ambitious of the clergy. Both parties agreed in a most sincere hatred of each other, and perhaps it was the only thing in which they did not differ. I have seen some pamphlets published in that reign, in which George III. is most illiberally abused, sometimes for preferring a Whig, at other times for preferring a Tory. The truth is, the worthless part of both factions were his secret enemies, as he chose to countenance honest men, without regard to the nominal distinctions of party. This evil leaven at last wore out, and the wisdom of Administration was felt and acknowledged.

L. 62. *A group of high, &c.* These are said to have been a set of swaggering blades, who much frequented coffee-houses. The Low Church heroes were zealous for republican government in the Church, and no government, or one subject to their own controul, in the State. The partizans of High Church were no less violent for monarchy and bishops. They are however said to have been

somewhat unsteady in their principles, as, on some occasions, they gave up both the crown and mitre.

L. 68. *Pimps, gambling, &c.* The Author, with great impropriety, couples pimps and pseudo patriots, as if it were as reproachful to gamble for places in the state, as it is to be the purveyor of lust.

L. 69. *And scriveners, &c.* We hesitate as to the propriety of the word circumcised, as it is certainly the auricular member which the Author has in his eye. It appears, from the records of the Old Bailey, that cutting off the ear, or nailing it to a pilory, was a species of discipline to which these ingenious gentlemen were much inured; and which they bore with such composure of face, that none of them were ever seen to blush.

L. 93. *If I mistake, &c.* The critics, who rarely agree in any thing, differ as to the word which should complete the rhyme of this couplet. Some think it should be *Nox*, and found their conjecture upon this, that a gentleman of that age was so called from his happy talent of darkening every subject he meant to elucidate. Others contend that it should be *stocks*, importing that the Author was so much persuaded of the truth of what he said, that he was willing to be fet in the stocks if every word of it was not true. For our part, we think this an improbable conjecture, as few Authors chuse to jest with that grave mode of reformation. The Editor of the tenth Edition is of opinion, that the word should be F—x, “For,” says he, “a young gentleman of family and distinguished parts, mentioned by the political writers of that age, had all the sagacity which the name imports; and could have smelt a false patriot at the distance of ten leagues.” In a case so doubtful, we shall give no opinion of our own.

L. 129. *In aid of honours, &c.* This passage may have pointed somewhere, and perhaps been understood at the time the Poem was published; but as such characters never live half a century, the writer is idly employed who endeavours to rescue them from oblivion.

L. 169. Some copies have this line, "If any thing but *hemp* shall tame me," which may possibly be the true reading; as that vegetable, applied externally, a little below the ear, is a sovereign remedy in all disorders which arise from an overflow of the animal spirits. One reason however determined us not to adopt this emendation, which is, that many thousands dread hemp who have no reverence for acts of parliament; it is therefore to be supposed that they would speak contemptibly of the one rather than of the other.

L. 253. *Attack'd in great, &c.* Our simple Author totally mistakes the character of Thermites, whose only claim to greatness was founded in an unblushing front, and a scurrilous licentious tongue. Nobody above the rank of a farmer could have supposed, that gentlemen of family and education would adopt the stile and manner of a wretch who for three thousand years has been the scorn of every man of honour.

NOTES TO THE SECOND CANTO.

LINE 33. *Depicted, &c.* Guilame was a writer of heraldry. Critics differ as to the name which should complete the next line. Some think it should be Ilium, for as Ilium, or Troy, stood a siege of ten years, a Commander in the reign of George III. was distinguished by that name, as is said, for having laid down a plan, by which America might be brought to her right mind in

that space of time. He proposed first to conquer the women, for " then, said " he, the men will fall in course. Balls, routs, and assemblies, he observed, " bring great numbers of the ladies together in all places of the world, and she " must be a lady of more than ordinary resolution that can resist a laced hat and " a feather ; of all colours, they most affect scarlet." But unluckily the plot was counteracted, for the rebels also fiddled, and sung, and dressed, and held routs, when they saw they might do it safely. Others contend that it should be William, a name then common in Great Britain ; but we have one capital objection to this opinion ; mistaking ignorance might apply the character to Sir William Howe, who for some time had the supreme command in America. A man of such distinguished courage, that when under the command of another, he is said to have thrown off his coat, that his blow might fall the heavier on the enemies of his country. A man who, though too modest to boast of what he had done, might have justly said, " I commanded as fine an army as ever " Britain raised." A man of such exemplary sober behaviour, that, when within doors, he was rarely seen without plans of battles, and maps of countries before him on the table ; or a Caesar or Polybius in his hand. A man so denied to pleasure, such an utter enemy to effeminacy, that he is said to have generally slept on a matrafs. A man so modest, that, like the Swedish hero, whom he so much resembled in the celerity of his motions, he could scarce bear the sight of a fine woman. Not that he was a woman-hater, but as conscious of the great and important trust committed to him, and jealous of human nature, which he knew had its weaknesses. So great an oeconomist, that he sometimes reprimanded his officers for the waste of flour upon their shoulders ; which, he humanely observed, might be one day wanted for bread to the poor men. Such a despiser of money, that it was questioned whether he had saved 200,000l. all the time he had the chief command. There may have been many other Sir William's in the army at that time ; I recollect one, whom I think no man ever mistook for the person here intended. He was honest, open, and brave ; amiable in

private life, fearless and intrepid in the field, and a sincere lover of his king and country. Such, if any faith be due to the historians of that age, was the character of the Lieutenant-colonel Commandant of Frazer's Highland regiment.

By the naval sketch, the Author probably alludes to a drawn battle of that age, in which some officers of inferior rank may have shewn a keener appetite for coming to blows than the commander in chief. If the Author were not known to have been a farmer, we should almost suspect him to have been a seaman, and personally prejudiced against this commander; he endeavours to turn very commendable qualities against him; a man should be mild and gentle, both at sea and land. It may be very true, that no man on board the fleet feared death; but this may have been as much owing to a confidence in their commander's bravery and conduct, as to an apprehension that he would not fight. For aught the Author knew, the gentleman may have had very solid reasons for ordering the ships at an offing to shorten sail. He may have known of shoals or flats in their way, which might have escaped the notice of a less intelligent seaman. He may have been a western Highlander, (for some Scotsmen were naval commanders in that age) who, by looking through the spiel-bone of a fore quarter of mutton, may have seen myriads of sharks and whales ready to swallow them up. Or he may have seen some captains too eager for the prize of glory; it certainly does not become one to pretend to more wisdom and courage than the man who commands him. The couplet which begins, "What! lose my ships," &c. is a perfect enigma; who were his friends? Those surely who preferred him to the command; if preferment be a mark of esteem. If his friends were also the friends of their country, the saving of a few ships could not have been their chief object, for ships and lives too may be honourably and even profitably lost. The gentleman had good reason to hope the thanks of many mothers and husbands, whose sons might have lost their sweet lives in a hotter engagement. It has been much disputed what word should rhyme to the

term *spouses*; some think it should be *houses*; but the abettors of this opinion are not agreed in the meaning we are to put upon the term; some would have it to signify the two houses of Convocation, who, by their profession, must be enemies to war and bloodshed. Others take it to mean two hospitals who might have had the burthen of many lamed sailors and marines thrown upon them. A third party think no more is intended than two celebrated taverns, or club-houses, where the gentleman's friends used to meet for the good of their country; and I have seen one commentator, who is of opinion, that the two Houses of Parliament must be understood. In our apprehension, the last is, by much, the most improbable conjecture, for no man in his right mind, could have hoped the warm applause of those respectable bodies, for having done the very next thing to nothing. To those who may think our Author's strictures too severe, we would observe, that Poets are ever apt to exaggerate matters, and therefore what they say should be taken with some grains of allowance. They have not been generally esteemed the most zealous worshippers of Truth, whatever fine complements they may have occasionally paid to that divinity. To the great comfort of many gentlemen of sickly fame, poets, and especially the minor poets, are generally poor devils, whose character and writings are held in an equal degree of respect. They may scribble and rail till their hearts burst, ere they bring a blush on the face of one lost to the sense of honour.

L. 431. *Who quaffs, &c.* Sack, a sweet wine, of a soporific quality, was in that age chiefly given to nurses and court-poets; to the first, that feeling the gradual approach of balmy rest, they might sing their lu-la-bas in the proper key, and worship the drowsy god in concert with the child. As the last sung but twice in the year, they much needed a chirping cup to keep off that *flagnum vitae*, which renders a poet rather the carcase than the vehicle of the Muse. Some are of opinion, that the more generous wines would be full as proper for an inspiring draught, and probably, for some weeks before our Laureats must

produce, they indulge themselves with a few dozens of Burgundy and Champagne. We however entirely agree with our wise ancestors, in thinking the richer wines of an inflammatory nature, and apt to inspire the drinker with too high ideas of liberty, as the crafty impostor Mahomet well knew. Many plausible reasons might be assigned why the Muse does not permit them as the constant beverage of her children, and why she only vouchsafes them occasionally to her favourites. By the constant use of them, our tragic writers would thunder unbearably; and Comedy become so licentious that no modest women would keep company with her. The Heroic Muse would soar above Blackmore; and the Lyric, exceed Centlivre in impurity.

NOTES TO THE THIRD CANTO.

LINE 8. "*The sons of Liberty are free.*" So plain a truth might have been told with less solemnity: perhaps the Author was of the same opinion. But in that age, like many other plain truths, it was little regarded. Many then living, some of them of distinguished note, while they enjoyed every liberty which the constitution allowed, and ventured to take many liberties which it disallowed, seemed to think that till an old prejudice, which deemed the minority the lesser number, should be eradicated, the people of Great Britain could not be free. In the present age, when the underworking spirit of faction no longer endeavours to sap the foundations of the constitution, we find it difficult to believe this; but the truth is, nothing but their own observation, or the most authentic vouchers, could convince reasonable people of the great lengths in absurdity to which party-spirit will go. It would, however, ill become us to boast of better principles, and a more serious regard for the great duties of morality and religion; as we must confess both to be, so far as second causes usually operate, the result of dear-bought experience. Our fathers, like the people of that age, despised their valuable privileges, because they were common. Some, as must be the case in

all times, acquired more property, or, by their personal merit or connexions, got into higher offices than others. This raised a spirit of envy and discontent; commerce poured in money; but the desires of Luxury were insatiable. Dissipation abused the blessings of peace, quarrels brought on war; war became a trade; great numbers assumed the military garb to support their vices; what they wanted in merit was made up in connexions. The just reverence for the laws was nearly annihilated; religion openly contemned; vice no longer affected the shade. What the consequences were, we all know.

L. 12. *The gods your righteous, &c.* The justice of a cause, and the moral qualities of those immediately concerned in the issue of it, are distinct considerations. Nebuchadnezzar had no right to the land of Canaan; the inhabitants had an unquestionable right to possess it. But, in the order of the divine Providence, it was become necessary to dispossess them for their immoralities and avowed contempt of religion. Wherever this is the case, equally vain are the counsels of the wise, and the strong arm of the mighty: the Judge of all the earth will do right. Though private people are not permitted to judge in the disputes between princes, every thinking man will form his own opinion of the matters disputed. There is no need of abstract reasoning and metaphysical distinctions to convince societies or individuals that they ought to do unto others what they would wish should be done unto them, in the like cases and circumstances. It is only necessary that they divest themselves of prejudices, and judge candidly.

When the French king took the American colonies into his protection, perhaps it would have been proper to compose a form of prayer for the troops to go upon that service. Had I had the honour of being one of those appointed to compose it, I would have offered the following Collect to the consideration of my colleagues.

NOTES TO THE COLLECT FOR THE KING.

“ O LORD ! the righteous Governor of the Universe, who art supreme over
 “ all ; by whom Kings reign and Princes decree justice ; who hast taught us,
 “ by thy holy Apostle St. Paul, that the powers which be are ordained of God.
 “ We beseech thee to bless and preserve Lewis our king and governor. Pre-
 “ serve him from the open attacks of his enemies, and the secret machinations
 “ of those who are given to change. Conscious of the duty and respect to
 “ which he is intitled from his own subjects, may he always discountenance the
 “ treasonable practices and open violations of duty in the subjects of other
 “ states and princes ; knowing, that as a man soweth, so shall he also reap. This
 “ we beg, &c.” Perhaps there is not a shorter nor a surer way of trying the
 conduct of individuals, or societies, than turning it into the form of a prayer ;
 for what we do, best instructs the rectitude or obliquity of our intentions.
 “ The paths of the upright are as the shining light.” If, prior to this æra,
 France had not produced a Fenelon, a Montesquieu, and a Voltaire, we should
 have doubted whether she was civilized. How unlike to her conduct was that
 of a sovereign Princess, alive at that period, who is said to have made the fol-
 lowing answer to an American emissary. “ I wish to extend my protection to
 “ the really oppressed of all nations and religions ; this I owe to God and hu-
 “ manity. But were I to countenance the subjects of another Prince in doing
 “ that, for which I should certainly punish my own with death or banishment, I
 “ should offend against that justice which all human beings owe to one ano-
 “ ther, and which I esteem the solid basis of my throne.”

L. 28. *And Faction shall applaud, &c.* Here our well-meaning Author
 betrays great unacquaintedness with the ways of men. Faction is too modest,
 too wise to applaud crimes ; an assembly of Hottentots would scarce bear it.
 By the aid of her good sister Rhetoric, she can twine a wreath for the brow of

one who armed against the laws of his country ; or depreciate the virtues of another who died in their defence. While honest Candour, after running over the whole, takes the medium of a character, and shuts the eye next her heart upon peccadillos ; Faction, with a lynx's eye, examines it by detail. The virtues of a friend she wire-draws, till a yard of them would surround the globe ; his foibles, for faults he cannot have, (or if he has any, she will never acknowledge them) are charged to the unsettled account of human nature ; no character is perfect. When one is right in his capital object, the adjuncts are of little consideration : Liberty and independence are the wish of every body, though people differ in opinion as to the meaning of the terms. The highwayman contends, that if he may not take the liberty of demanding one's purse, and even compel him to deliver it, he is not free, but subject to the controul of others. Very true, he is subject to the laws ; which was the great and capital grievance the Americans complained of in the reign of George the Third.

L. 84. Critics are generally of opinion that W——r——n, should be read Wotherspoon, and they found their conjecture on this, that a Scots Presbyterian clergyman, of that name, left Scotland some years before the American rebellion broke out. Being a man of parts, though of a versatile, restless disposition, he rose so high in the esteem of the disaffected, that they were in all things governed by his opinions. He became a member of Congress, where he was distinguished for his zeal against the laws, and the very being of that country which gave him birth ; whose bread he had long eaten, and where he had been intrusted to preach the gospel of Peace. Thus he lifted up his heel against the grandson of a Prince, in whose service, though then in holy orders, he had voluntarily borne arms in the year 1745. "Curst is he who putteth
"his trust in man."

L. 93. *The Book of Martyrs*,—Fox's Martyrology. This is a very improbable circumstance, they would have as soon burnt their Bibles.

L. 94. *Cock her hat*,—'Tis said some of the Quakers gave way to the wrathful principle, but that any of them gave up the venerable flouch, is highly improbable.

L. 95. *Quebec, in peace, &c.* When the inhabitants of Quebec had their religion and laws confirmed by act of parliament, the disaffected colonists made loud complaints against the iniquity of establishing Popery by law. So little did they foresee that Mass was soon to be said under the nose of Presbytery, and that the eldest son of the church was to be their political saviour.

L. 96. Some think this line should be read, "And geese and oats shall friendly chat,"—But, in our opinion, this would be a palpable absurdity; for though the downy tribe might jabber to the oats, it would be but expressing their own joy in the view of eating them all up. They might with great zeal and bravery beat off other poultry, from a motive that nobody could mistake. We therefore prefer the present reading; it was not the first time that Rome and Calvin had chatted in this manner; it must be owned, that they had more frequently been at loggerheads.

L. 100. *While safe in port, &c.* It was the custom of France, as it still is, when at war with Great Britain, to threaten invasions; though she had seldom much reason to boast of her success in attempts of that kind. In the age in which our Author lived, she was put to little trouble or expence in this way; as some gentlemen, from the exuberance of their affection to their country, announced the thunder of her fleets and armies, in places too sacred

for mean emissaries to show their faces. A gentleman, distinguished by this kind of public spirit, was roughly disciplined in the reign of George the Sixth. Though he was above exception for personal bravery, having, with the aid of a few unarmed companions, taken, by storm, several houses of genteel reception, he had formed such a superb idea of the Bourbon family and its connexions, that he always changed colour when they were mentioned. Some thought this tremor was only affected to reprobate the measures of Administration. Others, who had more charity, imputed it to a supposed intimacy between his mother and a certain Marquie, who had treated his father rather too cavileerly. Whatever be in this, while he one day flourished upon his favourite topic, he was called to order, and, as his manner was, not giving prompt obedience, he was sent to the Tower, with this short admonition. "Could you bear that servant, who should constantly entertain his fellows with depreciating harrangues on their own imbecility, and, by every topic that a wild imagination could suggest, endeavour to prove with how much ease and safety the servants of another family might break into your house? You have been long borne with; it is now the opinion of the house, that a little leisure for reflexion will do you good."

L. 101. *Shall screen your foes, &c.* Some critics think that there was no need of half the stir which the Author makes about the French king's protecting the Americans. "The conduct of Princes," say they, "is not to be tried by the strict rules of morality. France knew that Great Britain was her antient enemy, and but her precarious friend; the rivalry in their trade and foreign acquisitions was an incurable evil; was she therefore, judging as a politician, to let slip such a precious opportunity of embarrassing the affairs of her rival? If the glory of the grand Monarque be a rational object, and what Frenchman doubts of it? every mean that has a tendency to promote that end, is wise and just and good. We admit, that her last treaty of peace

“ with Great Britain, was sworn to in the name of the holy Trinity, but that is
 “ a matter of mere form. It was not specially stipulated by that treaty, that
 “ she should pay more regard to it than she had paid to the treaty of Utrecht,
 “ and to every other treaty for some hundreds of years past; while therefore
 “ she acted as formerly, she acted in character.” We shall make no remarks
 upon this reasoning.

L. 103. *While Amsterdam, &c.* This is a very improbable circumstance; the Dutch would much rather catch fish for themselves. Besides, how could the Author suppose, that a single province would presume to aid the rebels of a Prince in alliance with the States? Such an attempt would be subversive of the confederacy, and of all faith in the aggregate body, if not punished in an exemplary manner.

L. 105. *Iberia too, &c.* Possibly the author here alludes to a then late war between Great Britain and France, towards the conclusion of which, Spain took a part in the quarrel. By the loss of the Havannah, she experienced the truth of the old adage, “ that little is to be got by espousing other peoples quarrels.” The word *finesse* has still kept its ground, tho’ many more valuable have become obsolete. No man but a Frenchman can give a proper definition of it. In the language of honest men, it means an artful cunning, nearly approaching to deceit; in the French dialect, it signifies address, penetration, the *sine qua non* in a minister of state. It seems to be the result of a certain quickness of perception, and flexibility of manners; by the first, a Frenchman is better acquainted with you in half an hour, than a plodding Dutchman would be in half an age. By the last he can, with the most graceful ease, adapt himself to your humour; if it is vain and frivolous, you are his brother, his friend, his very soul; he will lay open to you the darkest recesses of his heart; if it is dull and phlegmatic, he will frisk about, laugh, sing, and tell fine stories till you are

perfectly charmed with his free and easy manner ; if you are plain and open, and have a sincere regard for truth, he has you hollow.

L. 121. *Wife steady*, &c. By the unremitting exertion of these princely qualities, Rome, in her best days, became superior to her most formidable enemies. She did not rashly engage in war ; and could forgive every thing but perfidy and injustice ; she enjoyed victory with moderation, and the loss of a battle only taught her caution. She had great confidence in the protection of the gods, and while Justice and Generosity were her allies, no arm, lifted against her, prospered. She made it a rule, never to treat with enemies, while they had arms in their hands. This showed a very elevated opinion of her own power, or great confidence in the justice of her cause ; when both united against Pyrrhus, he sighed to find her unconquerable. Many instances show, that in modern times, concessions offered, to vain insulting enemies, have produced bad effects. Humanity is a most amiable virtue, but base minds will in these cases always mistake it for artful cunning, dictated by the apprehension of danger.

Line 129. *O come*, &c. It would not have been much amiss if the Author had implored Peace to bring moral Honesty in her train, as without that plain old fashioned quality, trade and plenty are not what they should be. What avails it that we dread not the sword of an enemy, if, at every corner, we are like to meet a villain ? What avails it that our merchants and manufacturers have many hands at work, if their opulence only ministers to luxury and dissipation ; if the fulness of bread promotes debauchery, sedition and tumults ? Many causes may conspire to bring about peace, after mens own iniquities have corrected them ; but without a certain degree of integrity in the contracting parties, it can never be lasting. Commercial people, in all nations, either mistake, or put a very broad meaning upon statutes made for the regulation of trade and commerce ; and as they misapprehend, or pay little regard to the laws of their own country, it is not to be expected that they will pay much regard to the laws

of other countries. Where an advantage is to be got, they are apt to forget two good rules, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and, do unto others " what ye would they should do unto you." When they are checked in their illicit traffic by foreigners, and perhaps, were all circumstances known, treated with no greater severity than they merit, they complain to their respective sovereigns and legislatures, who often find it difficult, if not impossible, to come at the truth of facts. Judges and legislators must determine according to the evidence laid before them; if that evidence be false, or partial, the judgment pronounced upon it must be unjust, upon the main, though in respect to those who pronounce it, no reasonable objection may lie to it. If a man has imposed upon judges once, he hopes to do it again; and thus by the artful cunning of a few avaritious dealers, states and nations are involved in war and bloodshed. If the person who steals a horse, or robs on the high way, merits death, of what punishment is he worthy, who is the accursed mean of embroiling states at amity with one another, where thousands of lives may be lost, and ten thousands of innocent people reduced to beggary?

NOTE, omitted in the proper place.

Lines 106 and 107, we think, should be read,

Some hope a regiment, some a ribbon;

And some have merit; witness GIBBON.

The writer certainly had in his eye the celebrated Author of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, though he inadvertently mistook the termination of his name.

E R R A T A.

Cant. 2. line 349. for *slabe* read *slab*.

Cant. 3. line 130. for *thy poor* read *the poor*.

P. 68 of the Notes, line 8. for *women* read *woman*]

